



Adventure COMICS

PRESENTS

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NO. 440

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ADVENTURE
COMICS

The

SPECTRE

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CODE
AUTHORITY







IN THE WORLD
OF MORTAL MEN HE
IS **JIM CORRIGAN**.
HARD-BOILED POLICE
DETECTIVE -- BUT TO
THE VERMIN OF THE
UNDERWORLD HE IS
THE SPECTRE,
AWESOME AVENGER
OF EVIL. AN EARTH-
BOUND GHOST WHO
PUNISHES EVIL WITH
A FEARSOME
VENGEANCE FROM
BEYOND THE GRAVE...

THE SECOND DEATH OF THE... SPECTRE

SCRIPT • MICHAEL FLEISHER EDITOR • JOE ORLANDO

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AFTER BEING TRANSFORMED BACK INTO AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING ONCE AGAIN, LT. JIM CORRIGAN WAS SERIOUSLY WOUNDED IN A SHOOTOUT WITH A MEMBER OF THE NOTORIOUS "DUCKY" MCLAREN GANG. NOW, AFTER ALMOST TWO WEEKS IN THE HOSPITAL, HE HAS RETURNED TO WORK...



AND TOMORROW AFTERNOON I'M MARRYING **GWEN**! I'M SICK AND TIRED OF --

CHESTNUTS, LIEUTENANT? I GOT SOME REAL **HOT** ONES!



SURE, LOUIE! I'LL TAKE A BAG!

THESE'LL COST YA A **SAWBUCK**, LIEUTENANT!



FOR TEN BUCKS THEY BETTER BE REALLY **TASTY**, LOUIE!

OH, THEY **ARE**, LIEUTENANT!

"DUCKY" MCLAREN AND HIS BOYS ARE SICK OF HIDIN' OUT! THEY'RE READY TO TURN THEMSELVES IN!



YOU'RE **FULL** OF IT, LOUIE!

THIS TIP'S GOOD AS **GOLD**, LIEUTENANT! I MEAN IT!

BUT THEY WON'T SURRENDER TO NO-BODY BUT **YOU**! THEY DON'T TRUST NO OTHER COP BUT **YOU**!



I'M **TOUCHED**! ALL RIGHT, LOUIE! WHERE AND WHEN?

TONIGHT, TEN O'CLOCK! THE OLD **CAROUSEL** OUT AT **CONEY ISLAND**!

YA GONNA **BE** THERE, LIEUTENANT?

NOPE!

THAT NIGHT...

THAT LOUIE'S GIVEN ME LOTS OF GOOD *TIPS*... BUT I DON'T KNOW ABOUT *THIS* ONE!

ANYWAY, I'D BETTER BE *CAREFUL*! BECAUSE I'M NOT THE *SPECTRE* ANYMORE, SO IF IT'S A *TRAP*, I WON'T BE ABLE TO *LOOK* AT THEM FUNNY AND TURN THEM ALL INTO *COTTAGE CHEESE*!

TAKE IT *EASY*, CORRIGAN! YOU AIN'T GONNA NEED THAT!

WE'RE *SURRENDERIN'*! *HONEST*! DON'T YOU TRUST *ANYBODY*?

NO, SO KEEP THOSE HANDS *UP*, OR I'LL INSTALL A *SECOND HOLLAND TUNNEL* INSIDE YOUR *HEAD*!

ALL RIGHT, MITCH! WHERE'S "DUCKY" AND THE OTHERS?

OVER *THERE*, BEHIND THE --

RIGHT OVER *HERE*, CORRIGAN!

THEN COME ON OUT WITH YOUR --

WHA-!?

YOU'RE A DEAD MAN, CORRIGAN!



NOT UNLESS
YOU WANT *MITCH*
TO BE DEAD,
TOO, "DUCKY"!

AAGHH!
Y-YOU'RE
CHOKING
...ME!



OKAY,
CORRIGAN!
HAVE IT *YOUR*
WAY!

H-HEY!
WH-WHAT DOES
THAT MEAN,
HAVE IT YOUR--



BRAT **TAT** **TAT** **TAT** **TA**



WE **GOT** HIM,
"DUCKY"! HE'S
DEADER'N LAST
YEAR'S
LIMBURGER!

TOO BAD ABOUT
MITCH!

THAT'S HOW IT
GOES IN THE
GANGSTER BIZ...
WIN A FEW,
LOSE A FEW!

WHAT TO SINK YOUR TEETH INTO WHEN YOU'RE HUNGRY AND YOU'RE NOT A WEREWOLF

Every now and then, do you get this uncontrollable urge to bite into something that's really got some meat in it?

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OH MY GOSH!
WHAT IF IT'S JIM?
IT'S BAD LUCK FOR
THE GROOM TO SEE
THE BRIDE IN HER
OUTFIT BEFORE
THE--



GASP!
J-JIM!
WHAT'S THE...
THE...

I Was a Pesky
Cop. I got
What I
Deserved.



A FEW DAYS
LATER, THEY
BURIED
JIM CORRIGAN.
IT WAS A SIMPLE,
QUIET CEREMONY.
JIM CORRIGAN
HAD BEEN A LONELY
MAN. HE HADN'T
HAD TOO MANY
FRIENDS...

THEN THE PEOPLE LEFT, AND NIGHT CAME. THE GRAVES IN THE CEMETERY WERE SILENT NOW, AS SILENT AS THE GENILE MUNCHING OF WORMS...

...AND THEN A VOICE RANG OUT, IF YOU COULD REALLY CALL IT A VOICE. IT WAS MORE LIKE A CLAP OF BRITTLE THUNDER...

SHAKE AWAY THE SOFT, MOIST EARTH... AND COME TO ME--!

I AM CALLING YOU.. JIM CORRIGAN--!

TIME SEEMED TO STAND STILL...PERHAPS IT DID STAND STILL...AS THE GHOST OF JIM CORRIGAN SPED HEAVENWARD ON A RADIANT SHAFT OF UNEARTHLY LIGHT...

UNTIL FINALLY IT HAD REACHED THE MOST AWESOME DESTINATION OF ALL...

YOU MAY SPEAK... JIM CORRIGAN--!

WHY HAVE I BEEN BROUGHT HERE?

WHY HAVE
I BEEN **TORN**
FROM MY
GRAVE TO--

NO MAN CAN
ESCAPE HIS DESTINY--!
AND YOUR DESTINY IS TO
REMAIN EARTHBOUND...
TO STRIKE AT EVIL WITH
THE FEARSOME VENGEANCE
OF THE HEREAFTER...

...AS...
**THE
SPECTRE--!**

JIM CORRIGAN PLEADED...
BUT HE PLEADED IN VAIN...
AND SUDDENLY THE
GHOST OF THE SLAIN
DETECTIVE COULD FEEL
HIMSELF BEING PULLED
EARTHWARD BY SOME
INEXORABLE FORCE...
DOWN... DOWN...

WHAT DO I
CARE ABOUT
VENGEANCE?
IT'S ETERNAL REST
I WANT! CAN'T YOU
UNDERSTAND THAT?
HAVEN'T I **EARNED**
IT? HAVEN'T I?

...BACK TO THE CEMETERY,
BACK INSIDE THE COFFIN,
SO THAT ONLY THE JAGGED
HOLE IN THE SOFT BROWN
EARTH STOOD AS EERIE
TESTIMONY TO WHAT HAD
HAPPENED HERE...

WH-WHY, IT
LOOKS LIKE
SOMEBODY FOR-
GOT TO FILL IN
THIS **GRAVE!**

I'D BETTER
GET ME A
SHOVEL AND...

THAT **BANGIN'!**
COMIN' FROM
INSIDE THE
COFFIN!

NO
TIME TO
GET A SHOVEL!
SOMEBODY'S
BEEN (GULP)
BURIED
ALIVE!

THE OLD CAPTAIN DUG
FRANTICALLY, UNTIL HIS
FINGERNAILS WERE
CAKED WITH BLOOD.
AND FINALLY...

GASP!
N NEED
AIR!
GASP!

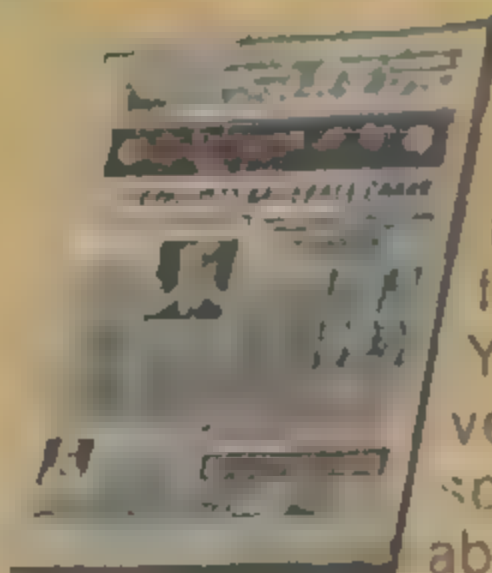
GASP!

COOV
LOEV!



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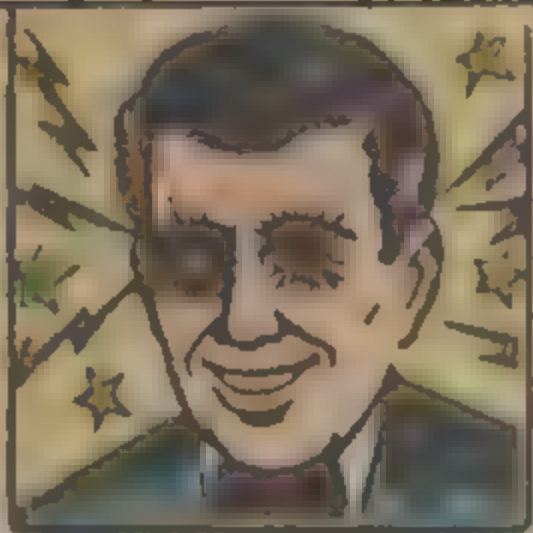
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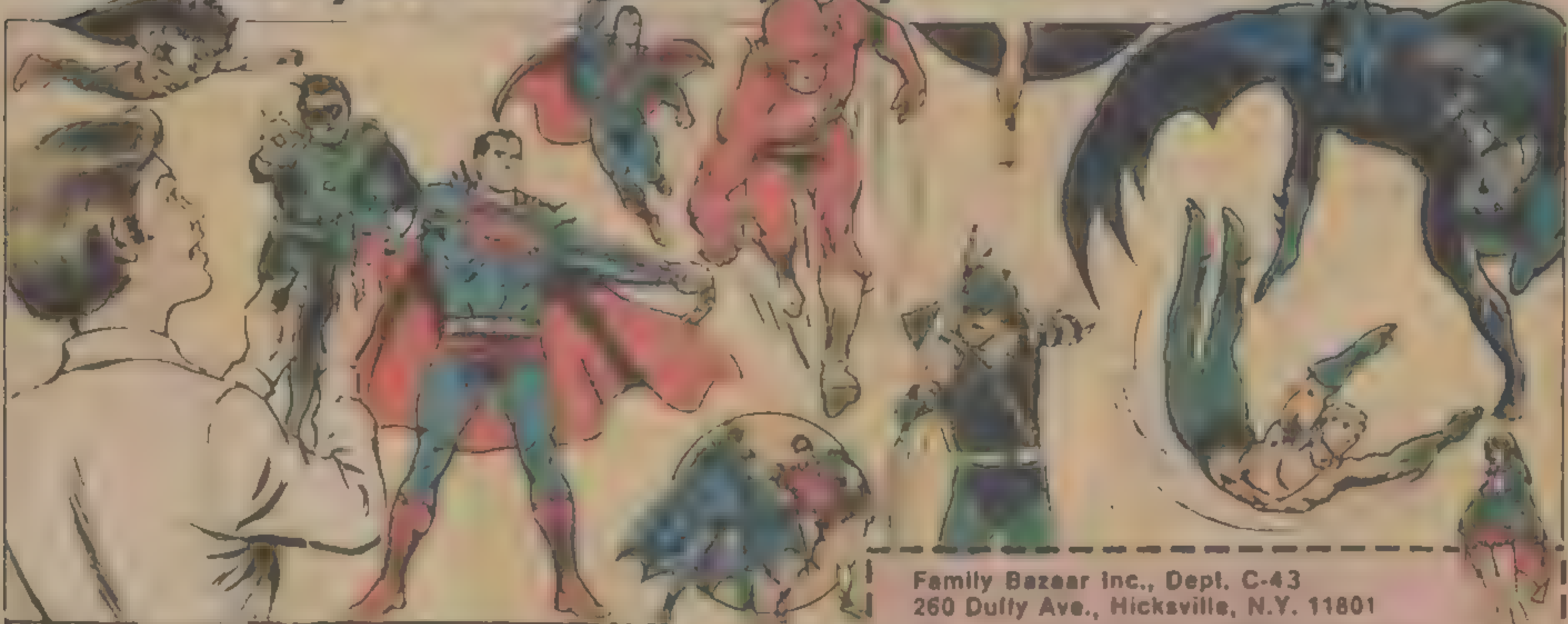
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A-ARE YOU
ALL **RIGHT**,
MISTER.

Y-YES! **GASP!** I-I
JUST NEED TO BE ABLE
TO... **BREATHE** FOR
A MINUTE!

YOU'RE DAMN **LUCKY**
I WAS PASSIN' BY WHEN
I **WAS!** I-I HATE TO
EVEN THINK WHAT WOULD'A
HAPPENED IF I
HADN'T **HEARD** YOU!

WHY, YOU MUSTA
BEEN IN A **COMA**
OR SOMETHIN', AND
...AND YOUR VITAL
SIGNS PROBL'Y
GOT SO **LOW** THAT
THE DOCTOR AND
EVERYBODY
FIGGERED
YOU WAS
DEAD!

EXACTLY
WHAT I **WANT**
HIM TO
THINK!

YOU COME WITH
ME! WE'VE GOTTA
GET YOU TO A--

WHA-!?
TH-THAT **FELLA**
I JUST HAULED
OUTA THAT
GRAVE! H HE'S
GONE!

HE MUSTA JUST
RUSHED OFF TO SEE
HIS **LOVED** ONES!
YES, SIR, I'LL BET THAT
YOUNG **FELLA'S**
MIGHTY **GLAD** TO
BE **ALIVE!**

MEANWHILE, IN A
DINGY WATERFRONT
HIDEOUT, "DUCKY"
MCLAREN AND HIS
HENCHMEN WILE
AWAY THE HOURS,
BLISSFULLY UNAWARE
THAT THEY ARE ALL
DOOMED MEN...

HA!
READ 'EM
AN' **WEEP**,
MUGSY! A
FULL **BOAT!**

AL,
LOOK!!

THE
END

WHATTA
I LOOK TO
YOU, **STUPID?**
LAST TIME I
LET YOU PULL
THAT "LOOK"
ROUTINE ON
ME, YOU
SWIPED
FIFTY
BUCKS
OUTA
THE--

C'MON,
MUGSY!
DON'T BE A
SORE--

P. PLEASE
LOOK,
AL!

WH-WHO
ARE YOU?
WH-WHAT DO
YOU **WANT?**

I AM LT. JAMES
BRENDAN CORRIGAN--!
AND WHAT I WANT...
IS VENGEANCE--!

CORRIGAN,
EH? WELL HE'S
DEAD, AND IT
JUST SO HAPPENS
I DON'T
BELIEVE IN
SHOOKS!

AL!
L-LOOK!!

GA P:!

GULP! I
BELIEVE IN 'EM!
I-I'M GETTIN' OUTA
HERE!

ME TOO!
C'MON,
"DUCKY"!
RUN!

MY **DUCK!**
I CAN'T LEAVE
WITHOUT MY
DUCK!

PLEASE,
"DUCKY"! WE'LL
BUY YA
ANOTHER--

NO! IT
WOULDN'T
BE THE
SAME!

MY **DUCK!**
WH-WHAT HAVE
YOU **DONE** TO
IT? WH-WHY IS
IT **GLOWING**
LIKE THAT?

Are your children ashamed that you never finished high school?



Maybe your kids have never come right out and said they're ashamed that you never finished high school. But it's the kind of thing a mother can sense.

You may have explained that there were good reasons for your dropping out of school when you did. But all a child can see is that many of his friends' mothers are better educated. That even though they aren't any smarter than you, they somehow speak just a little better. And seem to know more about a lot of things.

The part that hurts so much is that you *would* like to finish school — if only there were a practical, convenient way. It would be nice to learn some office skills at the same time. Something that could lead to an interesting job. Make your family proud of you. And bring in extra dollars too.

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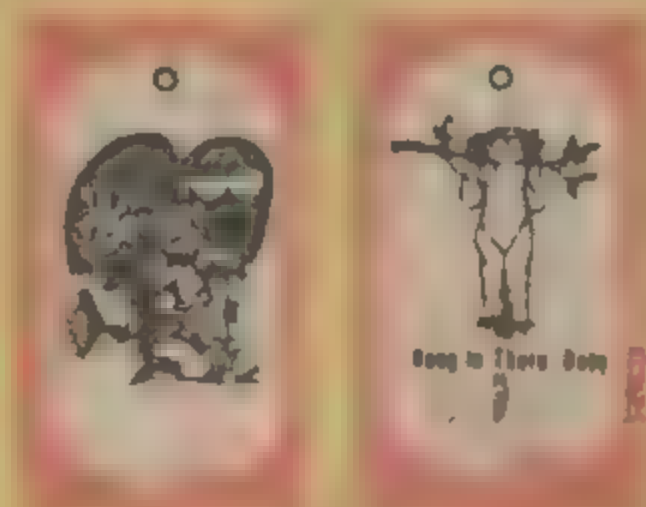
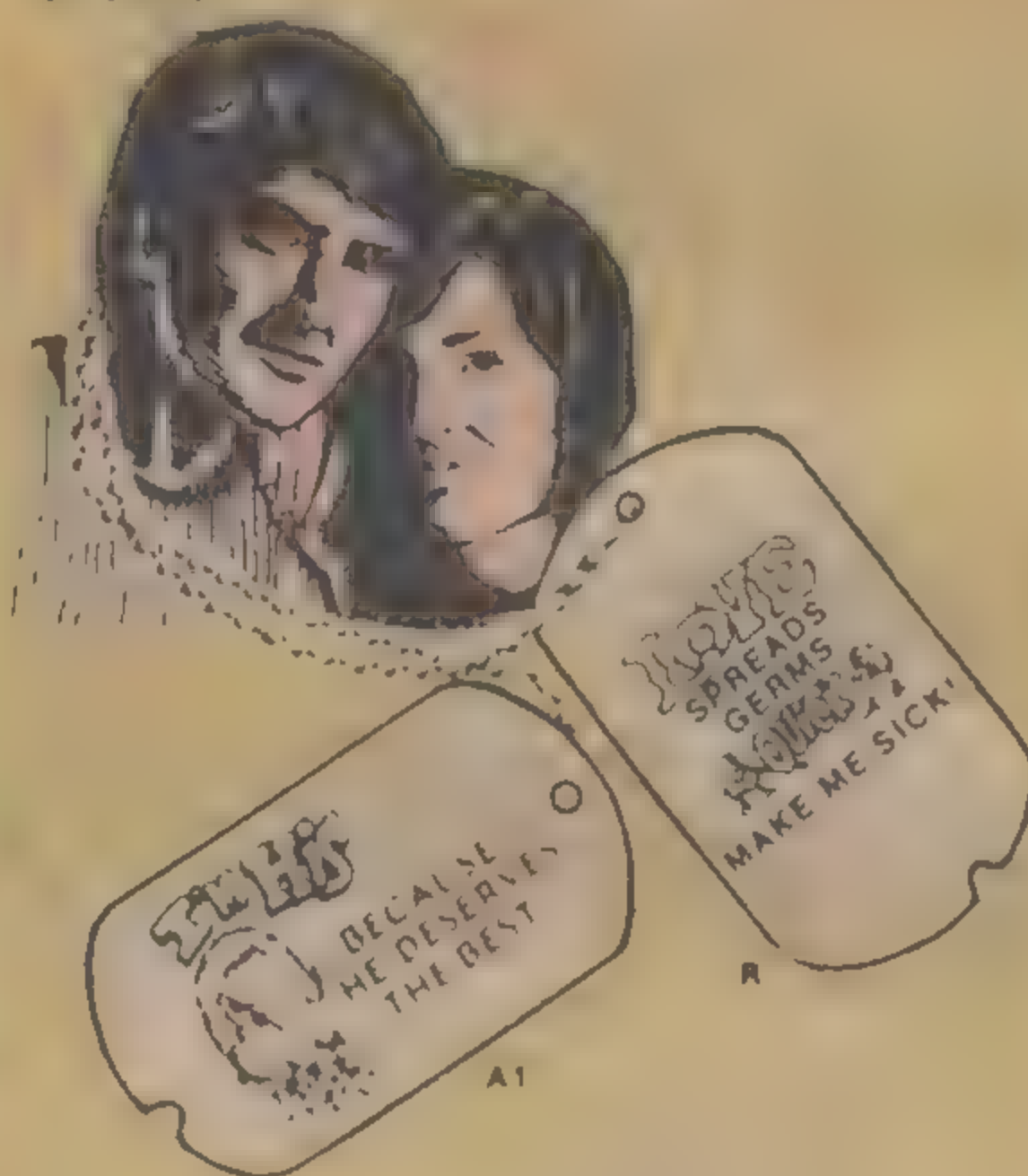
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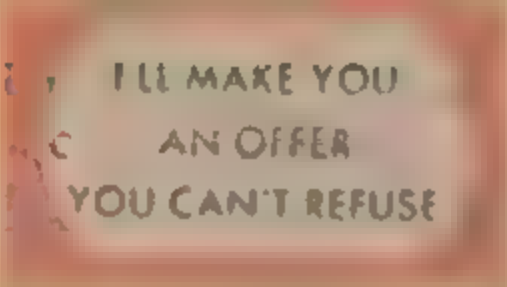
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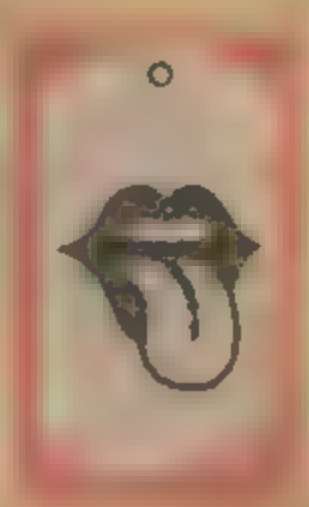
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X



9



V



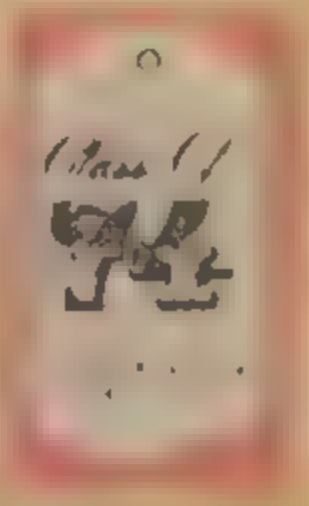
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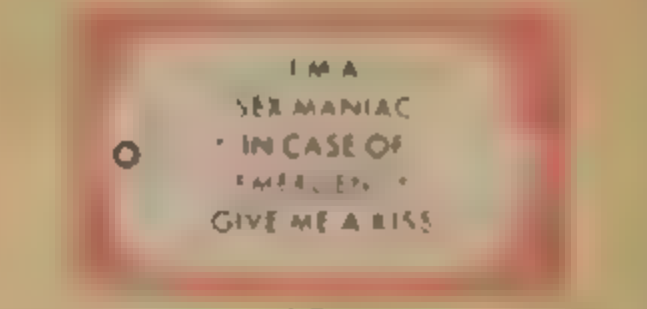
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N



E



A7

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ANSWER
ME! WH-WHAT
HAVE Y-YOU
DONE TO--

...BUT EVEN AN
ANT WITH THE WHOLE
UNIVERSE TO HIDE
IN COULD NOT
ELUDE...

...THE
SPECTRE..!

L-LOOK!
OUT THERE
ON THE ROAD!
I-IT'S HIM!

THE
OTHERS
THINK TO
FLEE...

H-HOW'D
HE GET IN
FRONT OF US
SO FAST?



BEFORE THE UNBELIEV-
ING EYES OF THE
TERRIFIED CRIMINALS,
THE SPECTRE GROWS
TO GIGANTIC SIZE, UNTIL
HE TOWERS ABOVE THE
ONRUSHING AUTO...

AND THEN, SEIZING THE CAR IN AN
IRON GRIP, HE HURLS IT INTO THE
STRATOSPHERE...

GOOD
LORD!
H-HE'S
GROWING!

RUN HIM
DOWN!

GASP..!

YAAAAHHHHH

...WHERE IT ERUPTS
INTO FLAME LIKE A
FIERY METEOR BE-
FORE HURLING
ONWARD INTO THE
TRACKLESS VOID
TO WANDER FOREVER
AMONG THE STARS...

LOOK,
DAD! A
SHOOTING
STAR!

MAKE
A *WISH*,
SON!

LATER..

OH, *JIM*! IF
ONLY I COULD
HEAR YOUR *VOICE*
AGAIN! IF ONLY--

HELLO,
GWEN!

JIM! MY
DARLING!
IS IT YOU?
IS IT
REALLY...

THE WORLD WILL BE
TOLD THAT *JIM CORRIGAN*
WAS BURIED ALIVE BY
MISTAKE... AND
RESCUED
BY AN OLD
CARETAKER!

BUT THE
TRUTH IS
THAT NO MAN
CAN ESCAPE
HIS *DESTINY*!
AND MY DESTINY
IS TO BE...
THE
SPECTRE..!

JIM! DON'T
GO! PLEASE
DON'T GO!

NO, GWEN!
IT'S NOT
REALLY ME!
IT'S JUST THE
SPECTRAL
SHADOW OF
THE MAN I *USED*
TO BE!

OH, *JIM*!
I-I'M SO
ALONE
WITHOUT
YOU!

THE
END

Scary 24 Size MONSTER



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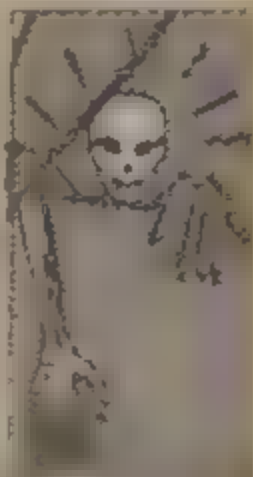
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 SIZE!**

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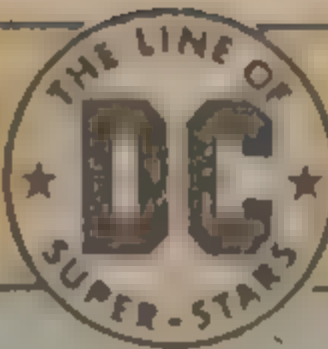
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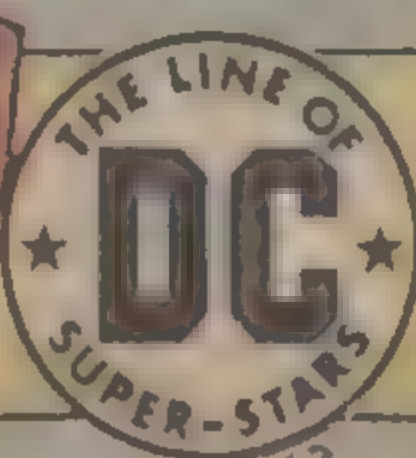
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IN OUR ALL-NEW ADVENTURE LINE



NOW ON SALE IN THEIR OWN ACTION-
PACKED MAGAZINES!

THE SAGA OF THE SEVEN
SOLDIERS OF VICTORY IN
THE LAND OF MAGIC CON-
TINUES AS WE JOIN...

CRIMSON AVENGER

AND WING ON A ROMP
'MID PLEASURES AND
PALACES--UNTIL THEY
FIND A ROYAL WELCOME--
AND ROYAL TREACHERY--
WHEN A SMALL-MINDED
MONARCH TRIES TO FRUS-
TRATE THEIR BIGHEARTED
PLANS! AND THEIR SITUA-
TION IS DESPERATE, AS
RULERS MAKE THEIR
OWN RULES, AND...

KINGS MAKE A FULL HOUSE

CHAPTER

4

SCRIPT: JOE SAMACHSON
ART: MIKE GRELL

A DISTANT PALACE BECKONS TO THE CRIMSON AVENGER AND WING...

THIS LAND OF MAGIC
NOT TOO BAD, MISTER
CRIMSON. LOOK--
NICE PALACE.

A LITTLE *FANCY*
FOR PEOPLE LIKE
US, WING, BUT WE'LL
SEE WHAT GOES
ON THERE!



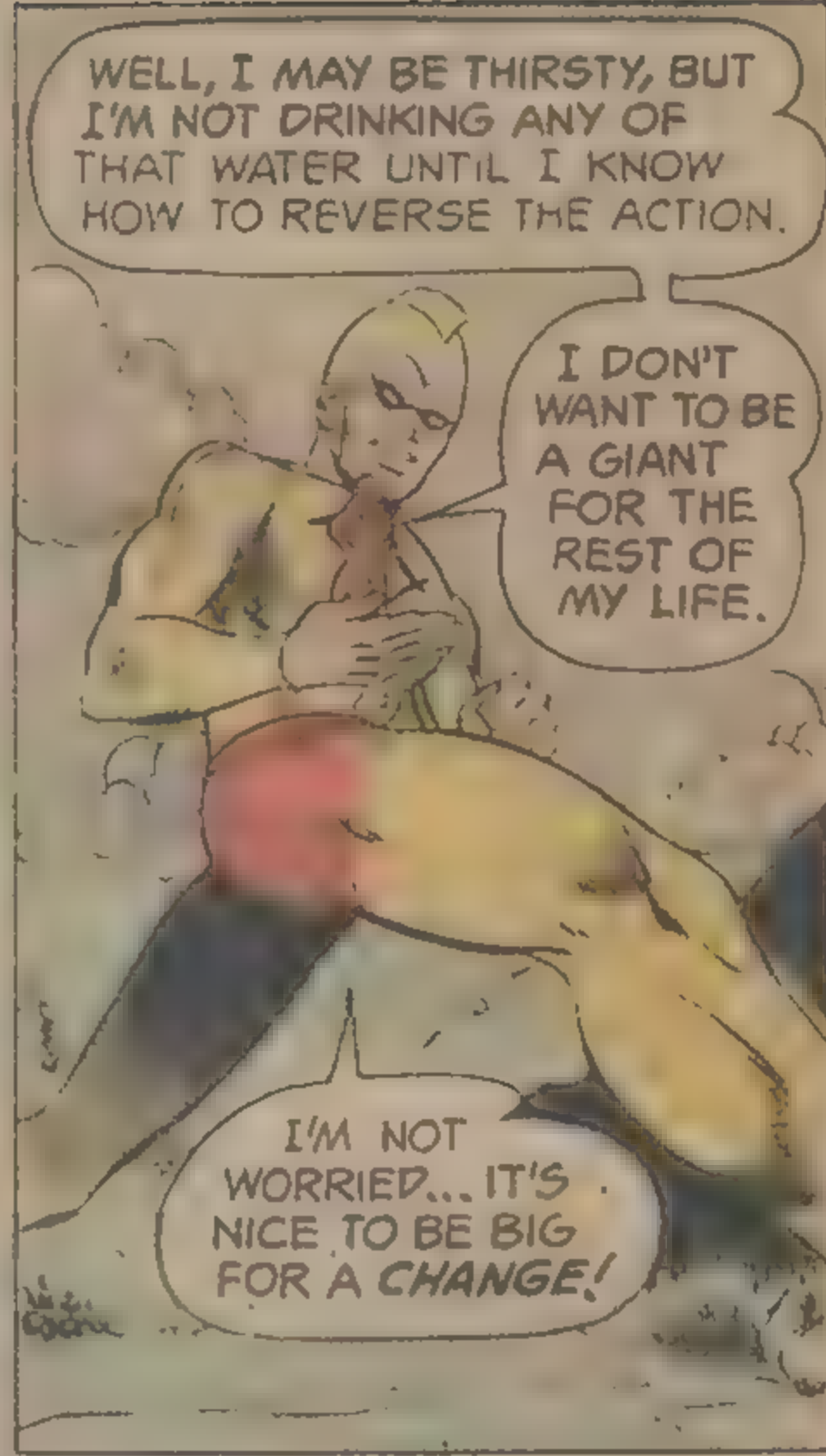


WAIT A
MINUTE, MISTER
CRIMSON! LET'S
STOP FOR A
DRINK!



HUH...?
YOU'VE
BECOME A
GIANT!

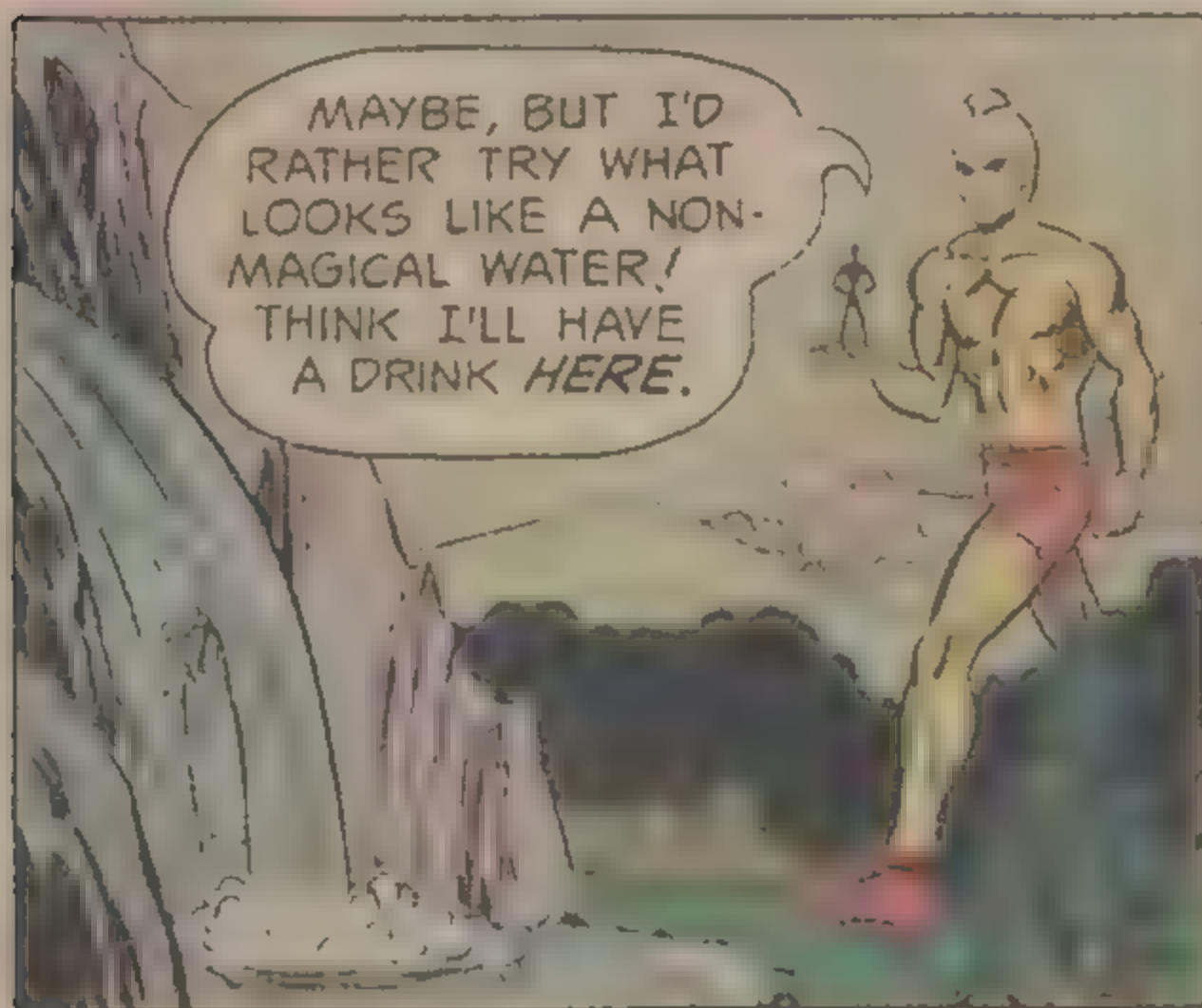
AND **STILL** GROWING!
ALWAYS KNEW I'D BE
A BIG MAN **SOME DAY!**



WELL, I MAY BE THIRSTY, BUT
I'M NOT DRINKING ANY OF
THAT WATER UNTIL I KNOW
HOW TO REVERSE THE ACTION.

I DON'T
WANT TO BE
A GIANT
FOR THE
REST OF
MY LIFE.

I'M NOT
WORRIED... IT'S
NICE TO BE BIG
FOR A **CHANGE!**

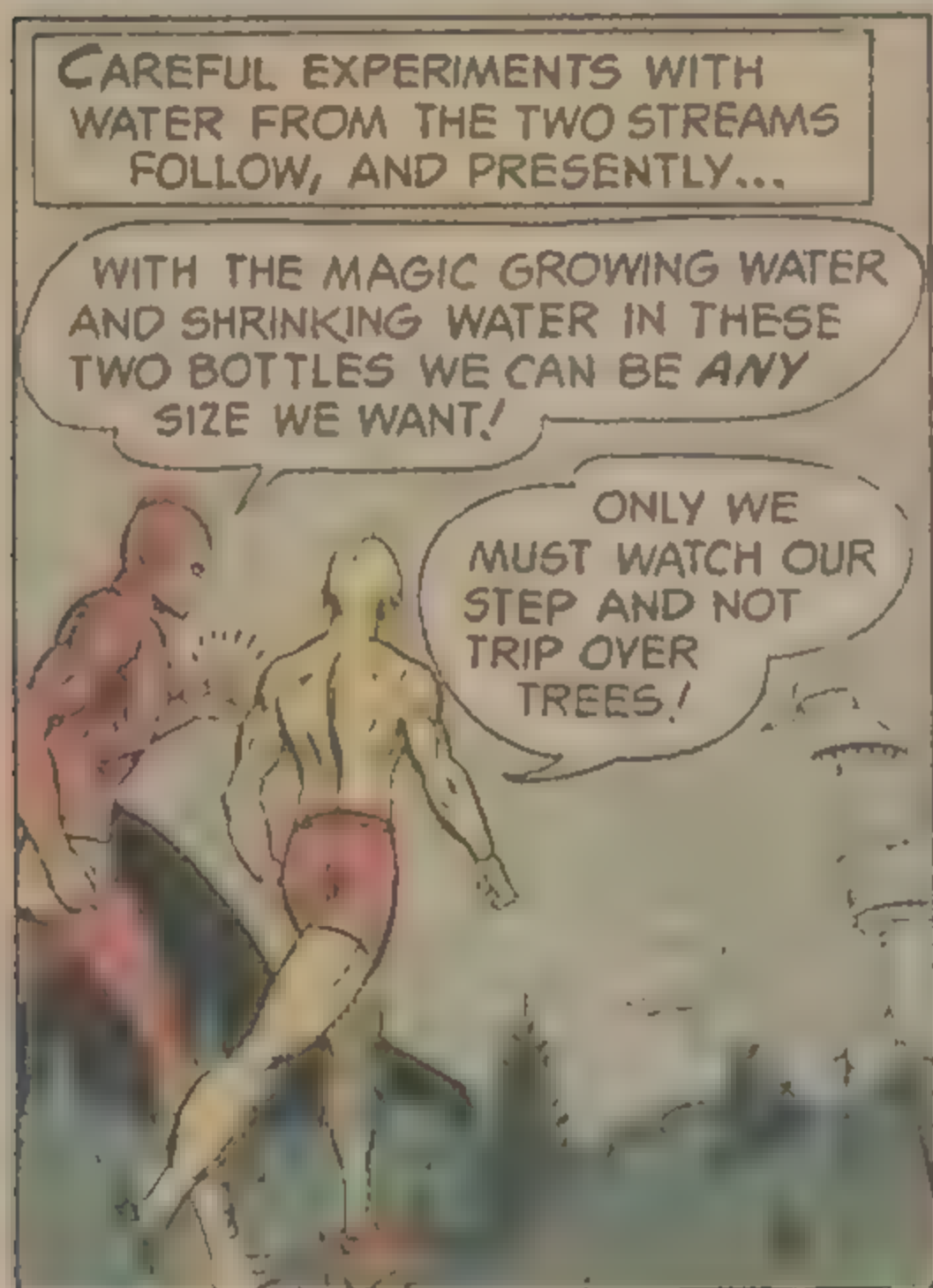


MAYBE, BUT I'D
RATHER TRY WHAT
LOOKS LIKE A NON-
MAGICAL WATER!
THINK I'LL HAVE
A DRINK **HERE.**



WHAT???
I GUESS THE
WATER WAS
ENCHANTED
AFTER ALL!

BE **CAREFUL,**
MISTER CRIMSON,
YOU'LL GET
LOST IN THE
GRASS!



CAREFUL EXPERIMENTS WITH
WATER FROM THE TWO STREAMS
FOLLOW, AND PRESENTLY...

WITH THE MAGIC GROWING WATER
AND SHRINKING WATER IN THESE
TWO BOTTLES WE CAN BE **ANY**
SIZE WE WANT!

ONLY WE
MUST WATCH OUR
STEP AND NOT
TRIP OVER
TREES!



LOOK-- THE
PALACE IS
STARTING TO
FALL!

MAYBE
WE CAN
SAVE IT--
HURRY,
WING!



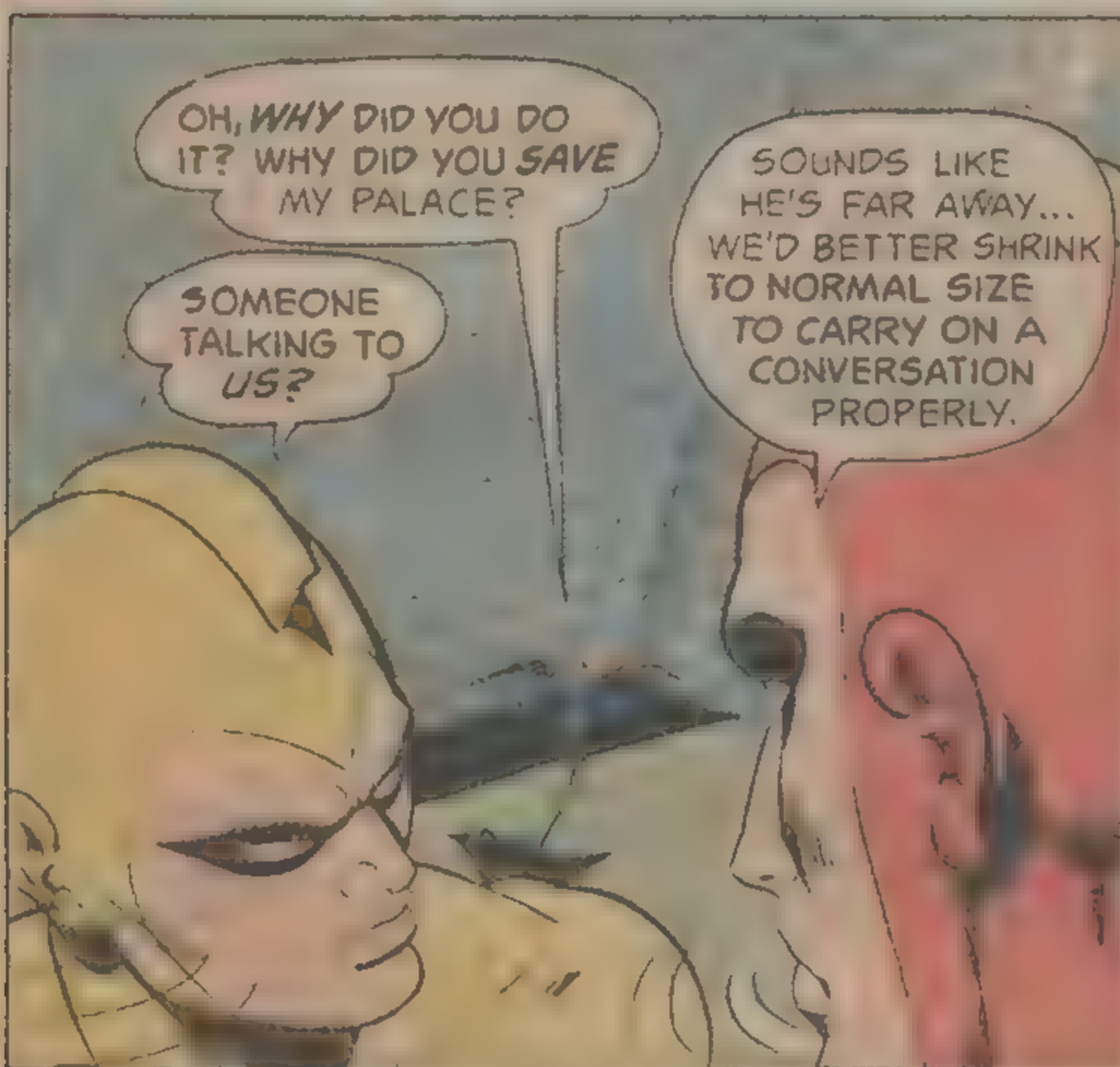
I GOT 'EM! AND IF THEY **DON'T FALL**, THEY CAN'T BREAK!

SWELL!
HOLD THEM
A MINUTE.



THESE TREES WILL KEEP
THE WALLS IN PLACE FOR
A WHILE.

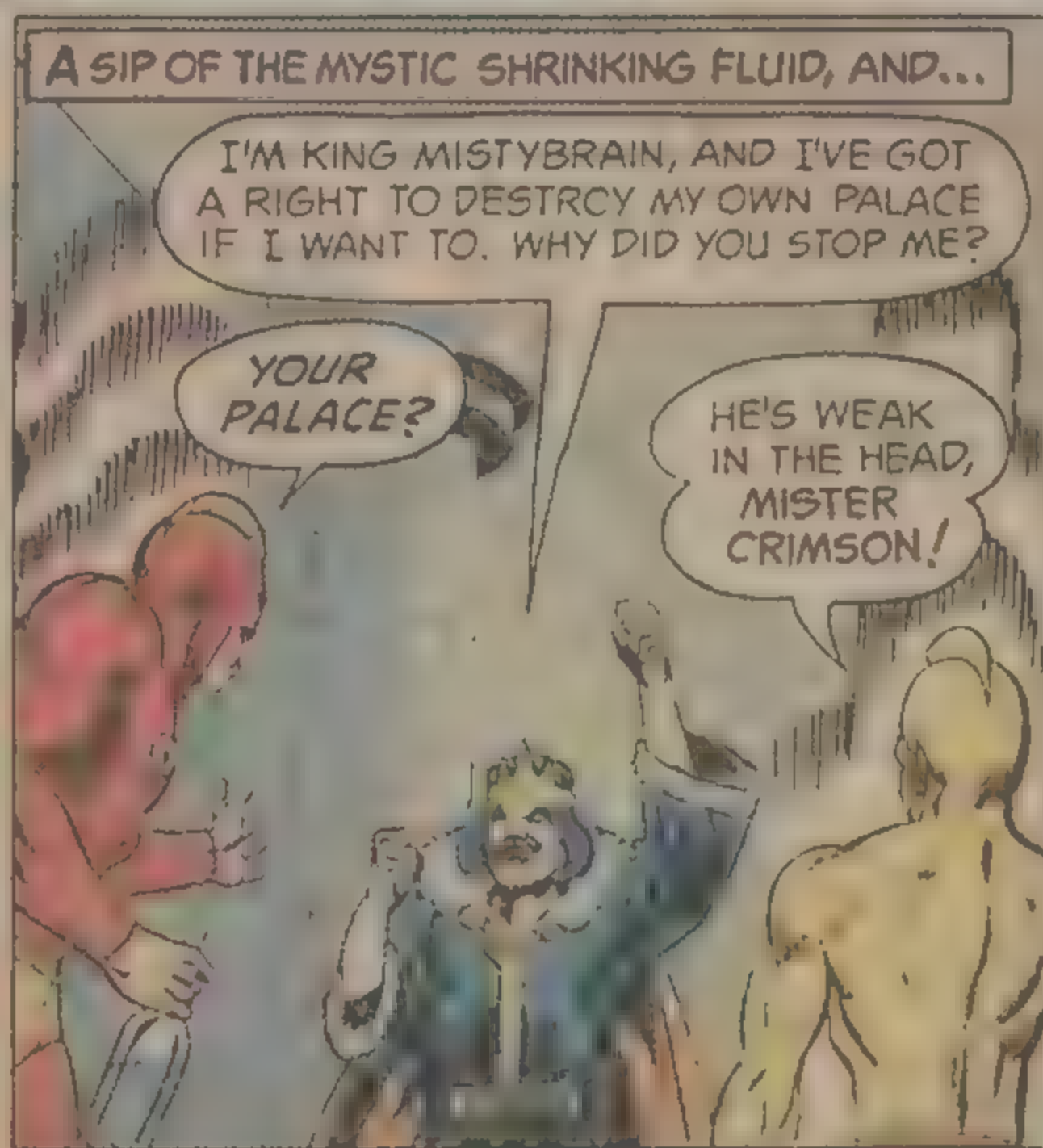
PRETTY **GOOD**,
MISTER CRIMSON...
BET **SUPERMAN**...
WOULD BE
JEALOUS!



OH, **WHY** DID YOU DO
IT? WHY DID YOU **SAVE**
MY PALACE?

SOMEONE
TALKING TO
US?

SOUNDS LIKE
HE'S FAR AWAY...
WE'D BETTER SHRINK
TO NORMAL SIZE
TO CARRY ON A
CONVERSATION
PROPERLY.

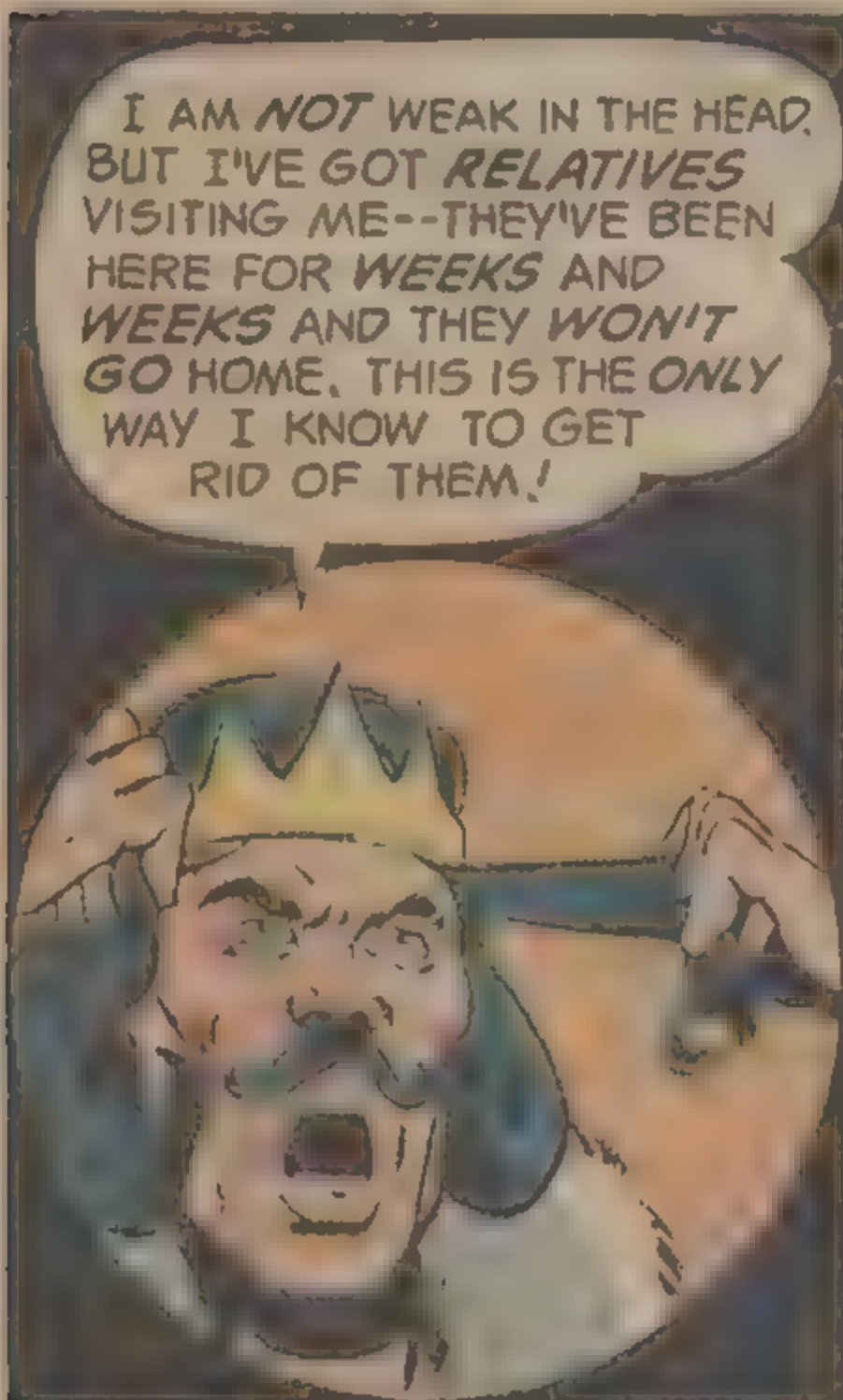


A SIP OF THE MYSTIC SHRINKING FLUID, AND...

I'M KING MISTYBRAIN, AND I'VE GOT
A RIGHT TO DESTROY MY OWN PALACE
IF I WANT TO. WHY DID YOU STOP ME?

**YOUR
PALACE?**

HE'S WEAK
IN THE HEAD,
MISTER
CRIMSON!



I AM **NOT** WEAK IN THE HEAD.
BUT I'VE GOT **RELATIVES**
VISITING ME--THEY'VE BEEN
HERE FOR **WEEKS** AND
WEEKS AND THEY **WON'T**
GO HOME. THIS IS THE **ONLY**
WAY I KNOW TO GET
RID OF THEM!



THAT'S **SILLY**. WHY NOT
TELL THEM TO GO HOME!

BECAUSE THEY'RE **ALL-**
KINGS LIKE MYSELF
...AND YOU CAN'T
TELL A KING TO
LEAVE. IT SIMPLY
ISN'T DONE!

HE'S RIGHT, W.N.G.
ONCE A KING GETS HIS
HANDS ON SOMETHING,
HE NEVER LETS GO--
AND YOU CAN'T ORDER
HIM TO. YOU HAVE TO
PRY HIM LOOSE!



BUT DON'T WORRY, YOUR
MAJESTY, WE KNOW WHAT IT
IS TO HAVE RELATIVES OVER-
STAYING THEIR WELCOME...
WE'LL HELP YOU!

UNKNOWN TO THE AVENGER, HOWEVER, HIS CONVERSATION WITH KING MISTYBRAIN HAS BEEN OVERHEARD-- BY HIS MAJESTY, ADELBERT THE ADDLED!

SO THEY WANT TO GET RID OF US, DO THEY? WELL, AS THE OLDEST KING HERE, IT'S MY JOB TO *STOP* THEM!

THOSE GIANTS SHRANK TO NORMAL SIZE WHEN THEY TOOK A SIP FROM ONE OF THOSE BOTTLES... *HMM*, I THINK I KNOW WHAT TO DO!

AND THAT EVENING, AS MISTYBRAIN ASSEMBLES HIS GUESTS FOR WHAT HE HOPES WILL BE THEIR *LAST* FREE MEAL...

FELLOW MAJESTIES, I HAVE THE HONOR TO PRESENT THE CRIMSON AVENGER, WHO WILL... WHO WILL TELL... WHO HAS A MESSAGE FOR YOU!

WE SHALL BE PLEASED TO WELCOME OUR FELLOW GUESTS, MISTY, OLD MAJESTY, BUT FIRST-- A *TOAST!* TO YOU, OUR *HOST!*

THAT'S IT! DRINK UP, EVERYONE!

WE'RE SHRINKING AGAIN!

HO, HO... I SPIKED YOUR DRINKS WITH PLENTY OF YOUR OWN SHRINKING WATER!

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELVES BEFORE I *SQUASH* YOU LIKE THE BUGS YOU ARE?

AH, WOE. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE IN THE *SOUP!*

NOT QUITE, WING, BUT *MAYBE...*

...THE *SALAD* WILL MAKE A GOOD HIDING PLACE.

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prising effect.

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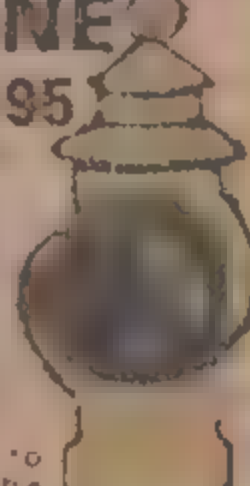
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under a cushion, then
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gives forth embarrass-
ing noises. Made of
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where the resemblance stops. When
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though it never stops.

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Chop a cigar-
ette in two in
either hole. Put
finger in top
hole and cigar-
ette in lower.
The cigarette is
cut, but your
finger is un-
harmed. Pull in-
structions.

No. 622 \$1



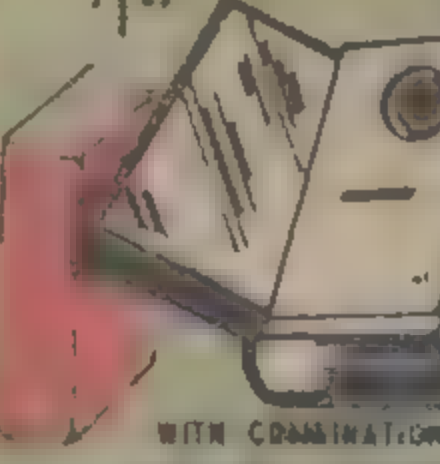
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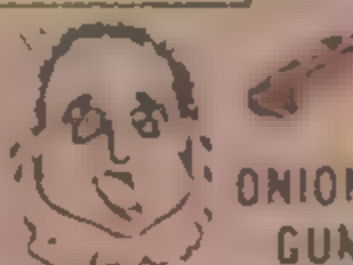
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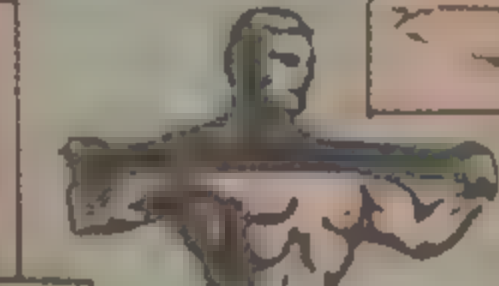


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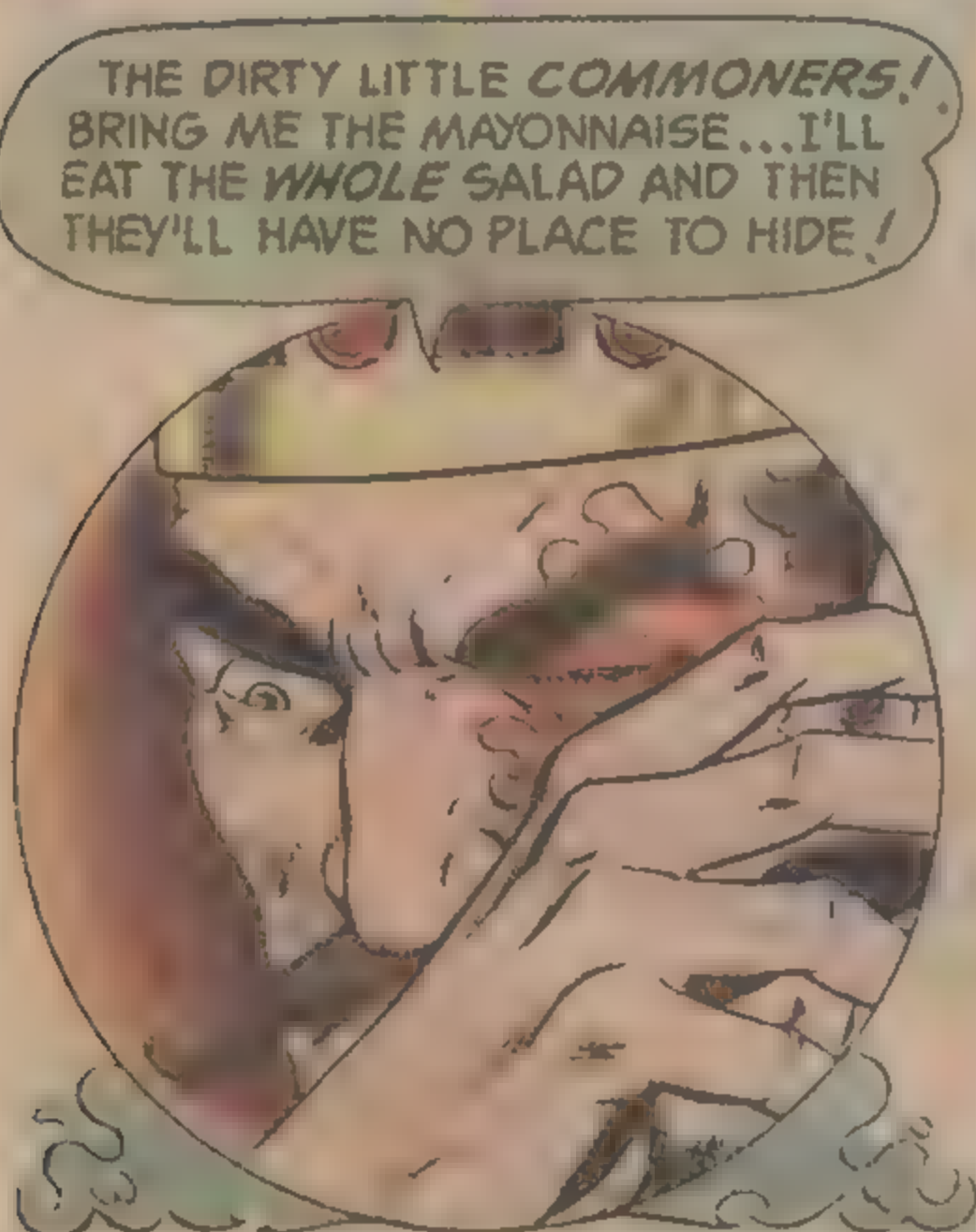
SO THEY THINK
THEY'LL *ESCAPE* ME,
DO THEY? I'LL
SHOW THEM!



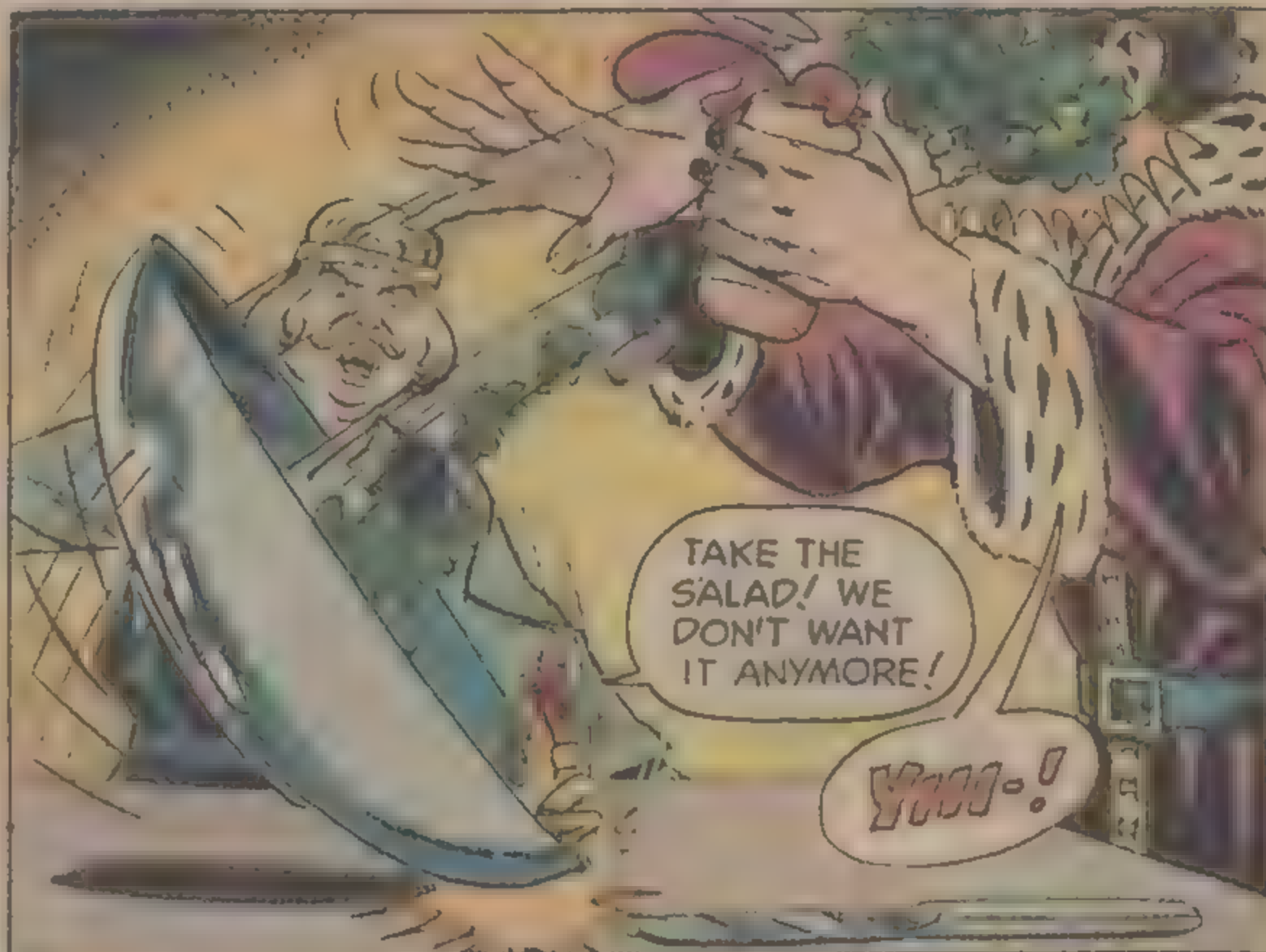
THAT'S WHAT
YOU THINK!
SCALLIONS TO YOU,
KING ADELBERT!



HERE'S A
BEAUTY
TREATMENT
FOR YOUR EYE,
TOMATO-NOSE!



THE DIRTY LITTLE *COMMONERS!*
BRING ME THE MAYONNAISE...I'LL
EAT THE *WHOLE* SALAD AND THEN
THEY'LL HAVE NO PLACE TO HIDE!



TAKE THE
SALAD! WE
DON'T WANT
IT ANYMORE!

YUM-!



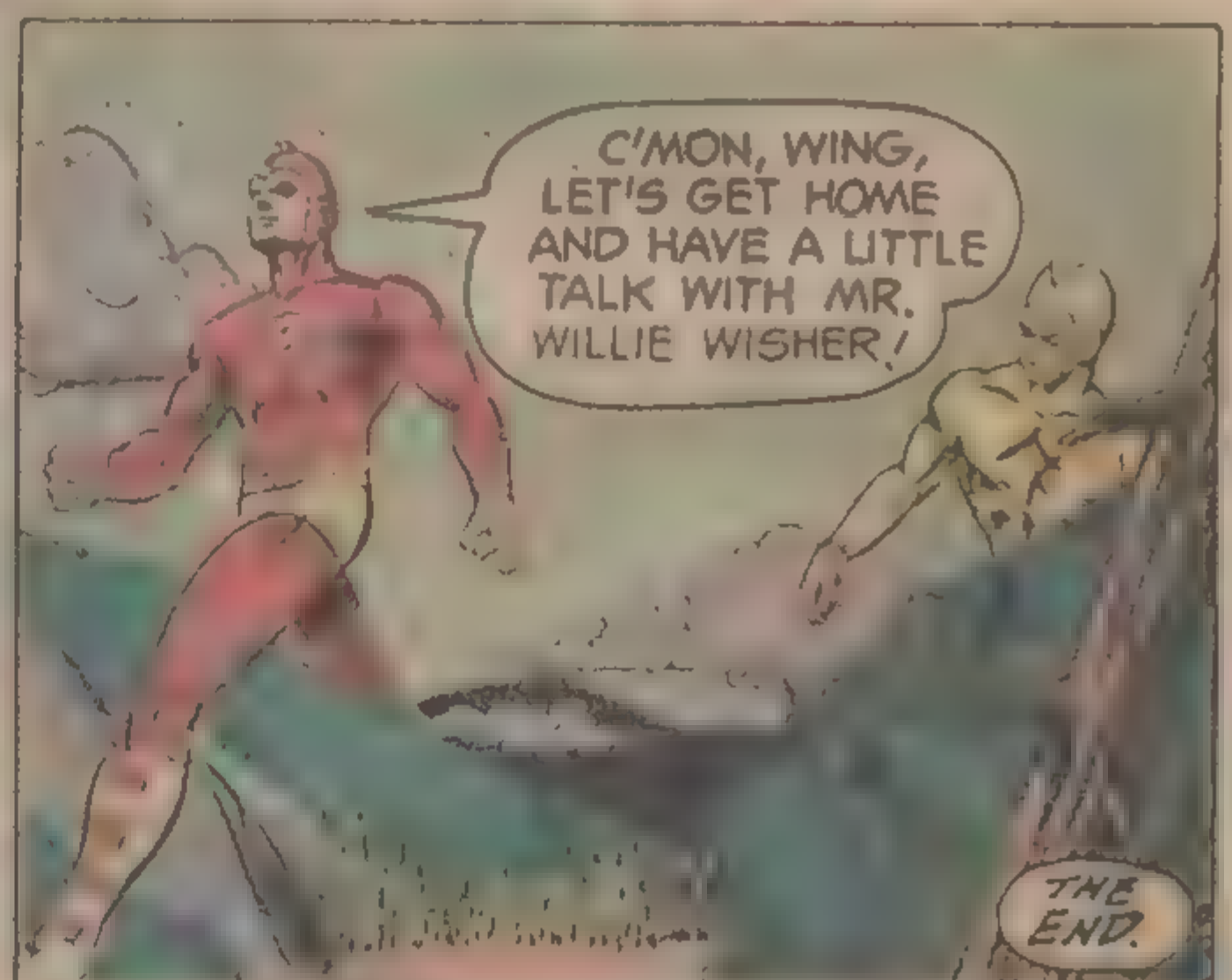
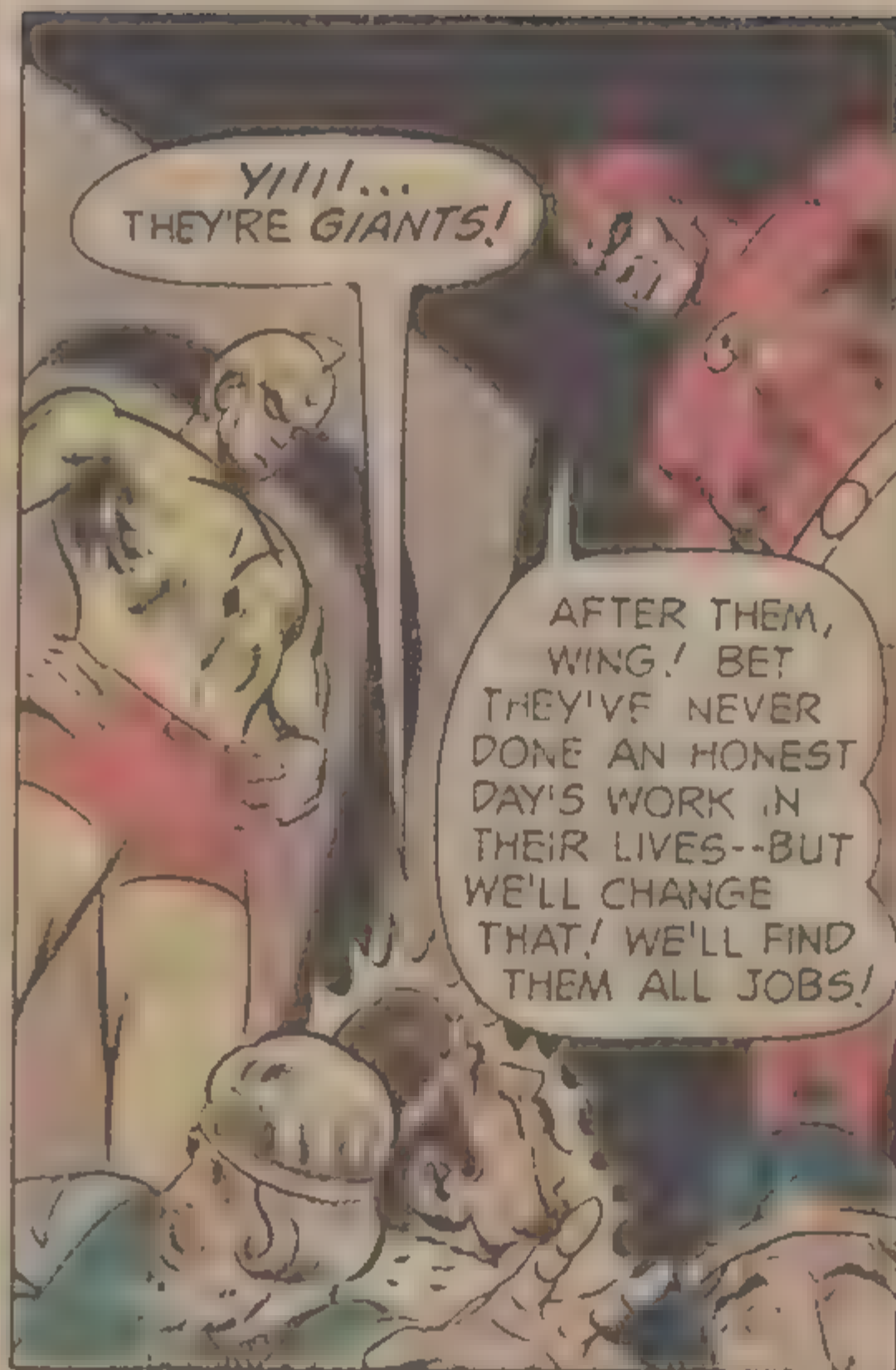
QUICK, WING,
WE'VE GOT TO GET
OUR *GROWING*
WATER BEFORE
HE RECOVERS
HIS WITS!



THERE'S NO
TIME TO DRINK
HERE... *DIVE*
IN, WING!



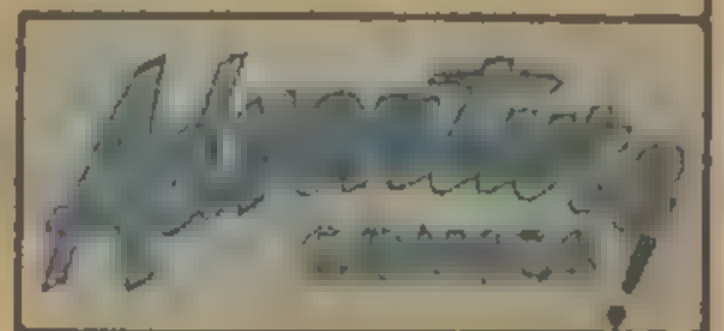
GLUB!



NEXT ISSUE:

AQUAMAN

BECOMES THE STAR OF



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VERSUS THE
"DEAD END ANIMALS"**

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DATELINE: ADVENTURE

J-3978

Dear Joe,

It's been a long time since I've been able to say that I've read a masterpiece the quality of **Adventure** #437. A truly amazing issue. An excellent Aparo cover (as always) wrapped around artwork in which Ernie Chua's pencils coincided with Jim Aparo's inks, creating a beautiful blend. And "The Human Bombs and The Spectre" has to be my favorite Fleisher script on this series yet.

Jim Corrigan's astonishment as he learns of Gwen's kidnapping helps the reader to believe that the 'dead' Spectre does have feelings for human life, and Fleisher casts a perfect mold for his villain, when the insidious doctor believes (on page 12) that the Spectre will make him pay for his crimes against humanity by throwing him in jail. If he had known his inevitable fate, a prison term might have seemed more appealing!

Mike Grell's art on the third and last (hopefully not for long) Aquaman story was vibrant, with a story plotted with flair by Paul Levitz. The highlight was page 6, with the girl playing underwater. It completely astonished me at first, as I thought the girl was drowning, but I suddenly realized that if Atlanteans live underwater, they also play underwater! Great realism.

This was the most enjoyable issue of the **New Adventure** yet.

David LeMay, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Current plans call for the return of Aquaman as the star of our next issue so you don't have a long wait.

.....

Dear Joe,

I never read mystery comics, which is why I never read **Adventure**. For all of his supposed status as a super-hero, the Spectre is one of the biggest horrors in comics today. The stories never vary, except as variations on a theme. And a grisly theme it is.

Nasty villain kills a bunch of unmemorable supporting characters in a nasty fashion, and is himself done in by our hero, usually in an equally coldblooded and horrifying manner. Funny, but even in his origin story, having just been murdered, and seeing the woman he loves in dire jeopardy, Jim Corrigan didn't actually kill anyone. He used fear to make evil its own punishment.

You'll never convince me the power behind Spectre is good.

On the other hand, there's Aquaman. Although the plotline was far from classic material, the tale by Paul Levitz and Mike Grell was well worth the quarter. The Sea King seems much younger, and

more personable than he has of late in other pages, a welcome change. I hope this time he's around to stay.

I see where we'll be treated to a newly-drawn Seven Soldiers of Victory tale next issue. I'm just sorry Mike isn't in on the art chores. Please bring him, Paul and Aquaman back the issue after, and I promise I'll stick around.

Jo Duffy, Wellesley, Massachusetts

Mike's snuck into the Seven Soldiers saga this issue, Jo, and although you underestimated the length of time it would take us to tell the tale (remember—it was to have been a book-length novel in the Golden Age—and runs 40 pages), we hope you stuck around to see it!

.....

Dear Joe,

The Spectre is a great strip, but it just isn't going anywhere. "The Human Bombs . . ." in #437 was tightly written, beautifully structured, and all-in-all a fantastic story. . . . However, it lacks the effect it should have had, because it is basically the same as the six previous Spectre tales.

Earl Crawford could provide some excellent variations on the avenging spirit theme, but he's nowhere to be seen this issue. And Gwen's relationship with Jim isn't going anywhere. Her roles are rapidly becoming the kind it took Lois Lane almost twenty years to get rid of—the damsel in distress.

The killing is not objectionable, but it's losing its effect. I was genuinely chilled by #431 . . . not so anymore. Michael Fleisher is heading towards sensationalism, and that's something to avoid.

The art is perfect. Jim Aparo is marvelous, but the Chua-Aparo team is so good, you might consider using it to free Jim for more work.

Meanwhile, Aquaman was fan-tastic. That's a pun, folks . . . because former fan-mag editor Paul Levitz wrote the story. Everybody knows that only true fans can write stories that other true fans will go crazy over. "A Quiet Day . . ." took a rather dull idea and turned it into a great story. It would've made a great text feature, but seeing it in comics form was a fan's dream come true. If Aquaman does get his own mag again, it should be under the collective belts of Levitz-Grell-Orlando.

So, until Aquaman #57 or **Adventure** #438. . .

Bob Rodi, Oak Brook, Illinois

.....

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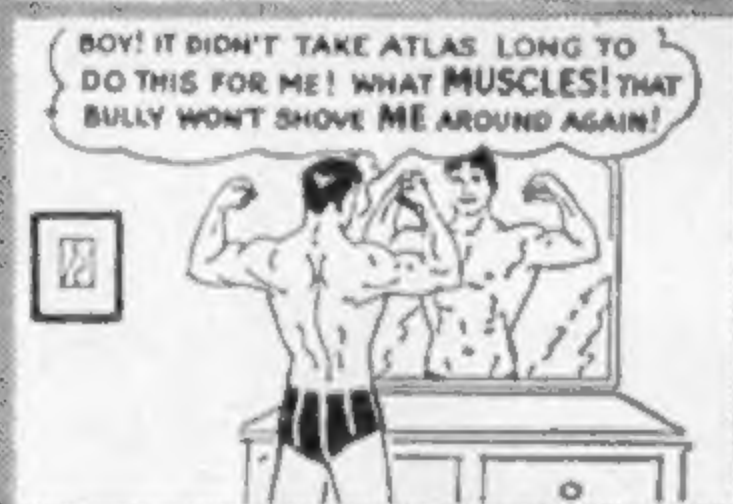
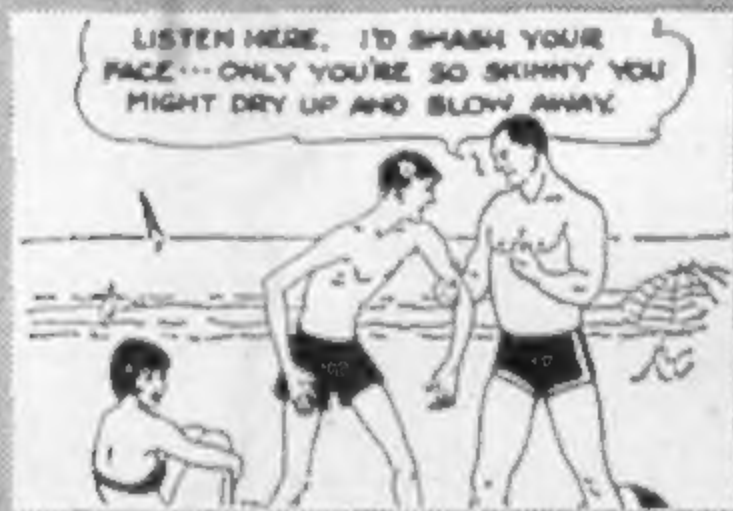
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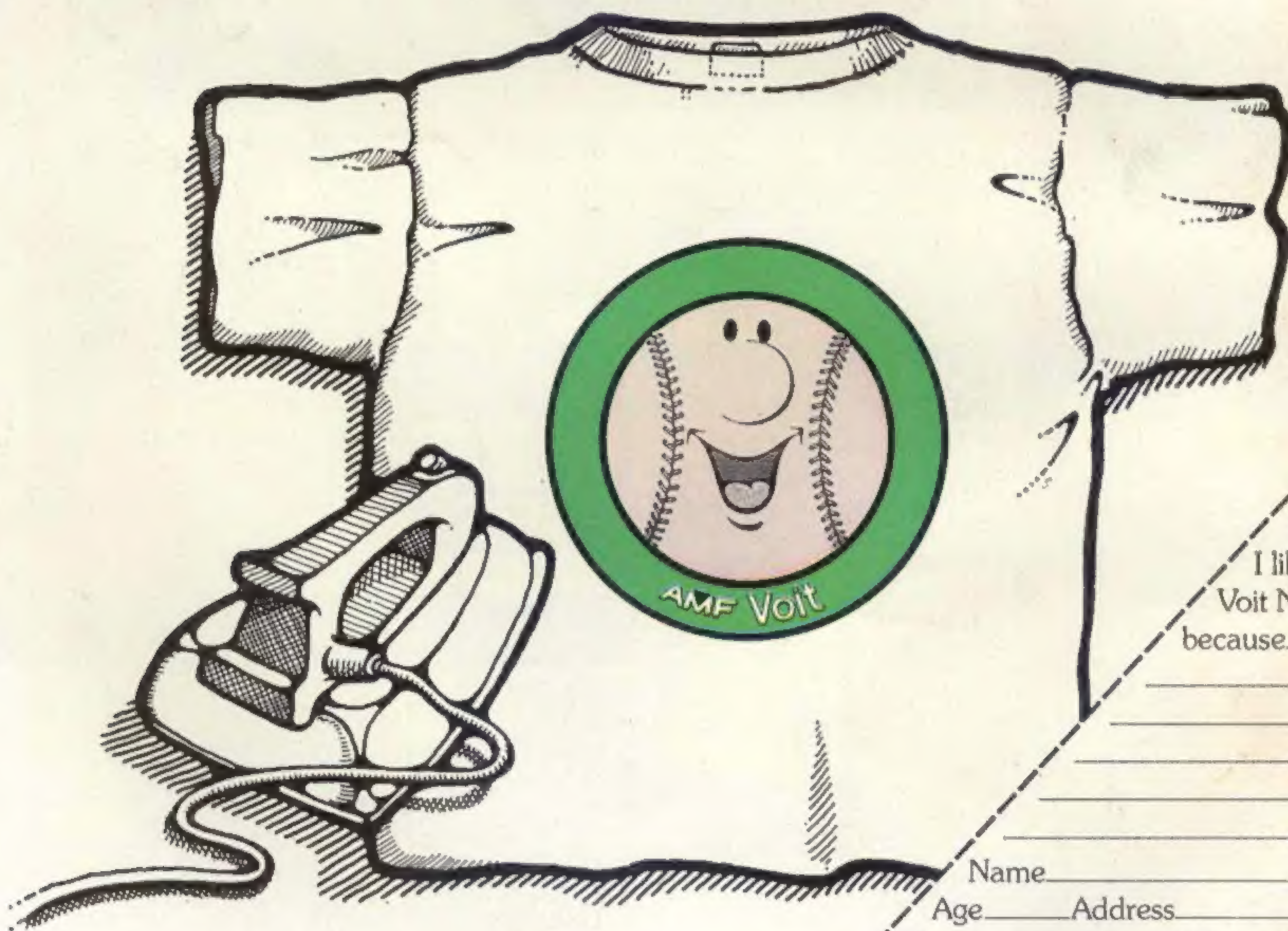
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